

Academic Senate 231ABC: Grading

Final Examination

Prerequisite: There is no formal prerequisite, other than faculty standing, but students who have taken AS201ABC, AS202ABC ... AS 230ABC may have stronger performances on the historical portions of the exam. Students who plan to continue may take Academic Senate 232ABC in 1996-97.

Part I. Analytics.

- [1] Koo has a GPA of 3.25. Stone's GPA is 2.98. Both are applying for graduate study in economics. Koo will be the more imaginative and productive economist.
- True False Indeterminate
- [2] Koo has a GPA of 3.25. Stone's GPA is 2.98. Both are economics majors. Koo's average grade in economics classes is higher than Stone's.
- True False Indeterminate
- [3] Koo has a GPA of 3.25. Stone's GPA is 2.98. If they marry, they will have a GPA of 3.11 and small change.
- True False Arithmetic
- [4] Koo has a GPA of 3.25. Koo did her best work—superlative work—as a senior.
- True False Indeterminate
- [5] Koo and Boo are twins. They did identical work. In graded courses they achieved identical grades, but Koo chose to take P/NR in one-third of her classes, while Boo took ABC grades in all classes. Koo and Boo will have identical GPAs.
- True False Indeterminate
- [6] Koo and Boo are enrolled in CIS 131x Graphical Compression. Their instructor assigns them a project to compress a 500-byte graphic [which shows a sketch of an individual] into an 11-bit code, and then average 36 11-bit codes generated by that means [from sketches of the subject taken from different angles and poses] into a single 11-bit code. Finally, they are to expand the resultant 11-bit code into a meaningful representation of the original subject. Their instructor is
- Brilliant Mad Foolish
- [7] Assume that it is true that grades are representations of performance, but imperfect (because instructors differ, courses differ, course-choice criteria differ, &c.). A GPA is useful because it provides a means by which the unavoidable imperfections and inconsistencies in grades can be canceled out, yielding a more meaningful measure.
- True False Indeterminate
- [8] You submit, to the principal journal in your field, a paper in which your argument relies on comparative measures constructed according to the methods by which the GPAs of a representative sample of undergraduates are constructed. Your paper is
- Published Rejected
- [9] Because the GPA is a reliable measure of comparative performance, business, industry, and higher education promote and reward according to GPA analogs. In higher education, this is known as the Faculty Performance Average [FPA].
- True, and my FPA is _____. False

Part II. History.

- [8] The UCSC faculty initiated “pass/no pass” because many members of the faculty agreed that ABC grades were indefensible as measures of the complexity of a student’s work.
- True False That was long ago
- [9] Some argued that if grades were flawed, the “grade point average” was the *reductio ad absurdum* of a grading system.
- True False Who cares anymore?
- [10] Many faculty believe that an instructor can conscientiously *encode* a performance into a grade. But they also believe that it is impossible to *decode* a grade into a description of a performance.
- True False So what?
- [11] Some of the original faculty argued that it was important to set an example, showing students that what mattered was the *quality and texture* of performance, and how performance *could improve with time*. Grades and a GPA, they argued, contradicted those messages.
- They were utopians. Be opportunistic! I’m busy. Don’t confuse me.
- [12] The centerpiece of the UCSC ‘experiment’ is the Narrative Evaluation System.
- As long as we keep the NES, we can commit any travesty whatsoever.
 The original plan required a narrative evaluation in every course.
 A GPA will provide additional information about a student’s performance.
 None of the above.

Part III. Praxis.

- [13] The CEP report and proposal contains a careful assessment of the arguments for and against a “grade point average.”
- True False Are you kidding?
- [14] The CEP proposal presents systematic evidence and persuasive argument that adopting a GPA will lead to an increase in the number of students enrolling at UCSC.
- True False Who needs data?
- [15] Establishing a GPA will not encourage students to enter courses with a reputation for giving higher grades, nor will students avoid courses where grading is ‘tough.’
- True False Are you kidding?
- [16] Perhaps the problems of UCSC arise from disarray and weakness in the undergraduate curriculum, especially at lower division. There is no assessment of what typical students actually accomplish in aggregate as freshmen and sophomores: what they read and how well, what they write and how well, what they experience and practice, what facts and techniques they master and how well. This disarray is made worse by administrative incentives to reward Boards for the number of total registrations in classes. Despite courageous faculty efforts to work against the tide, the unintended result is that a Gresham’s Law of watered-down expectations encourages lower-division students to take college as casual.
- True False Could CEP address this?
- [17] The best choice for the Senate this term is to
- Thank CEP and the GANES authors for their work.
 Return (‘commit’) the CEP proposal and GANES alternative to CEP for further work.
 Ask CEP to consider objections to a GPA and explain why they should be overridden.
 All of the above.

